

AMAA News



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AMAA Delegation Meets with Armenian President Serge Sarkissian

An AMAA delegation led by AMAA Executive Director Andy Torigian and AMAA Representative in Armenia, Rev. René Léonian met with the President of the Republic of Armenia, Serge Sarkissian, who complemented the AMAA on the wonderful work they are doing in Armenia and encouraged them to continue their splendid work. (Pictured L to R) Albert Momjian, Esq., AMAA Solicitor, Michele Simourian, Co-founder of the Orphan and Child Care Committee, Rev. Rene Leonian, President Serge Sarkissian, Andy Torigian, George Phillips, Sr., Esq., former AMAA Vice President and Joyce Stein, AMAA Board Member.



AMAA News

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Celebrations

Andrew Torigian

"The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and I am helped. My heart leaps for joy and I will give thanks to Him in song." (Psalm 28:7).

This year marks the 90th Anniversary of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA). It coincides with the 90th Anniversary of the founding of the first Republic of Armenia when on May 28, 1918 after the great battle of Sartarabad, the Armenians repelled the Ottoman Turks and declared a free and independent Armenia.

Shortly thereafter, the Armenian Evangelical Churches at their annual meeting in Worcester, MA decided to form an organization that would be able to reach out to all Armenians disbursed during the Armenian Genocide by the Ottoman Turks. As a result, they formed the AMAA to extend a helping hand to Armenians in the Near East, to rebuild the schools and churches that were destroyed in Historic Armenia and also to help strengthen the newly independent Armenia. However, soon thereafter Armenia lost its independence when it came under the dominance of the Soviet Empire, and the remnants of the Armenians of Cilicia disbursed and came to settle in the Middle East, mainly in Lebanon and Syria. The AMAA became one of the major missionary organizations to help the newly established Armenian Evangelical communities in the Middle East and to build new churches and schools in their newly found homes. After 70 years of Soviet dominance, on September 21, 1991 Armenia became independent again and the doors were opened. AMAA immediately entered with humanitarian, social and spiritual aid to our homeland. With God's grace, over the past 90 years AMAA has continued to provide aid and spiritual guidance to Armenians in 22 countries, including Armenia. On this 90th Anniversary of the AMAA, we praise God and we thank Him for allowing us to celebrate this auspicious occasion and to give us the privilege of service.

The AMAA always cares for our fellow Armenians because we always have in mind the words of our Lord and Savior who said in Matthew 25:40 **"Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."**

The first celebration of the AMAA's 90th Anniversary took place in Armenia. A group of 88 AMAA supporters went to Armenia where they saw the projects of the AMAA, the historic sites of Armenia, and a great thrill when they met face to face with the orphans and needy children supported through the Child Sponsorship Program. Also a special AMAA 90th Anniversary concert took place on July 17 with 1,250 people present including government officials, representatives of foreign embassies in Armenia, and AMAA supporters.

The next celebration will be in Paramus at the AMAA's 90th Anniversary Banquet on Saturday, October 18, 2008 where our special guest will be Mrs. Rakel Dink, wife of the late Hrant Dink.

"You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands." (Isaiah 55:12). □

AMAA Makes Summer Special For Children in Armenia & Karabagh

With the cooperation of the Evangelical Church in Armenia (ECA), once again during the summer months of July and August, the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) organized camps for children and youth in Armenia. Thousands of children came to a healthy environment where they received nourishment, played games, enhanced their talents, participated in sports activities, socialized, made new friends and most of all learned about Christ and enjoyed His love.

Fourteen full camp sessions were held in two locations, namely Sheen Shoghig Camp in Hankavan, Armenia and Bedrossian Camp in Shoushi, Karabagh. Thirty-five hundred children and youth participated. Each session lasted seven days. In addition, 48 day camps were held in other locations with 4,000 children participating. Here the children spent the day at camp, but returned home at night.

Upon arrival to camp, the children were instructed on camp regulations and they were told that they have to love and respect each other, like Christ loves and respects us all. The camp days were filled with activities that made time go by fast. Through their games, singing, arts and craft activities, Bible stories and studies, the campers experienced the presence of God in a personal way. Many came to camp with little or no knowledge about Christian faith. They were given the opportunity to read the Bible, learn to pray and praise God. Many adolescents committed their

lives to Christ. By the end of the session, their testimony made it evident that money spent on such programs was worth every penny.

Vanatzor was one day camp area where hundreds of children participated. Vanatzor is about 120 kms from Yerevan and is one of the major cities in Armenia. The Evangelical Church in Vanatzor has nice facilities with a beautiful sanctuary, many activity rooms, indoor and outdoor gyms, and most of all dozens of volunteers who come everyday to lead and serve the children. A group of 10 interns this year from the United States also participated in the activities in Vanatzor. The interns helped renovate the facilities. They painted the fence, refinished the gym and built a sidewalk and brought new flavor to the camp. There were over 150 children attending each session. This was a great experience for both the children and the interns. They shared their joys and their talents. They played, sang and studied together. By the end of the day, the children would not go home and wanted to spend the rest of the day talking, playing and have a wonderful time specially with the interns from abroad.

Summer Camp programs were held also in other countries with high Armenian concentration like Bulgaria, France, Georgia, Lebanon, Syria and the United States. These programs are made possible through the efforts of the AMAA Summer Camp Committee and the generous contributions of our donors. Much credit is given to the local Evangelical churches and volunteers who do their best with limited resources. They have the love of the Lord who loves the children and commends us to serve their needs.

The Armenia Summer Camp and Christmas Committee every year organizes events in North America to raise funds. Many donors respond generously, but much more is needed. The AMAA each year spends over \$100,000 to organize summer camps. The camp sites in Armenia and Lebanon need much



Children on the bus eagerly waiting to arrive at camp.



Artwork prepared by children at Vanatzor camp.



AMAA intern enjoying time with children.



Children praising God with their songs.

renovation in order to make the facilities more comfortable. We need to do our best to take care of the needs of our little brothers and sisters. Those who want to participate in these vital programs, both through their volunteer services or giving from their finances can contact the AMAA at 31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652. The phone number to call is 201-265-2607 and e-mail is amaa@amaa.org □

Our Trip to Armenia Begins the 90th Anniversary Celebrations of the AMAA

On Tuesday, July 14th a group of more than 80 AMAA supporters from five countries assembled to board the tour buses for the first day of site-seeing on the Armenian Missionary Association of America's commemorative 90th Anniversary Trip to Armenia. Over the course of eight days, the group traveled together around Armenia visiting AMAA projects and historical sites of Armenia. The robust itinerary offered everybody an opportunity to either reacquaint themselves with the motherland, or for others it was an introduction to Armenia. The first day of the trip included sightseeing stops in Yerevan such as Matenadaran: Depository of Ancient Manuscripts, National Gallery of Armenia, Museum of Armenian History and the Museum of the Armenian Genocide. A very touching moment took place when everyone held hands and circled the eternal flame at the Genocide Monument and the Executive Director prayed.

The following day, after going to Lake Sevan, the group visited the Sheen-Shoghik Camp in Hankavan where the Landes family, from California, donated baseball equipment, hats, visors and t-shirts. A special highlight of the afternoon was spent teaching the children at the camp the rules of baseball and an exciting impromptu baseball game ensued. The afternoon was capped off by a show which included a dance group from the AMAA community center in Gyumri and songs presented by the children at camp.

On Thursday, the group was brought to the new site of the AMAA Center and Church, where the new Seminary building was toured and everybody saw firsthand the progress of construction of the AMAA's new headquarters. Afterward, the group was taken to the current AMAA Center and the Nerses and Arpine Aynilian Medical Clinic where a special presentation was made to Arpine Aynilian with her family in attendance.

Visiting the Khoren and Shoushanik Avedisian Elementary School in the afternoon was another distinctive highlight, where an assembly of students welcomed the group with songs. Edward and Pamela Avedisian, the School's benefactors who were in attendance introduced the School's Principal, Melanya Geghamyan,

and mentioned that the School recently received the distinguished honor of being the best school in Armenia in 2005.

Later that evening, the group attended a very special concert at the Philharmonic which was dedicated to the 90th anniversary of the AMAA. Prior to the concert, Andy Torigian, AMAA Executive Director spoke in Armenian and English welcoming the dignitaries, guests and AMAA supporters and gave a brief history of the AMAA and thanked the Armenian Government for cooperating with the AMAA and allowing the AMAA to continue its mission. Rev. René Léonian, AMAA representative in Armenia, also spoke and extended AMAA greetings. Aram Gharabekian, Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia presented a moving program. Following this memorable concert, 90 Years of Miracles was celebrated at Arma Restaurant high on a hill which overlooked Yerevan as the sun was setting.

Over the course of the next three days, the group visited historic churches in Oshakan and Ashtarak, St. Gregory the Illuminator Pit, Khor Virab, Etchimiadzin, Garni and Geghart and had an opportunity to bargain at the Vernissage market.

In the midst of visiting these sites, the group spent an afternoon at the AMAA Center and Church in Vanadzor. This afforded the group the opportunity to meet up with the Internship Program attendees who were in Vanadzor. It was a wonderful afternoon where the group mingled with members from the AMAA Community Center and saw firsthand the great work the Internship Pro-

gram students accomplished.

Toward the end of the tour, the group was offered the opportunity to hear a special performance by the Shoghik Choir at Sartarabad. Rev. Garush Antonyan, the Artistic Director of the choir and pastor of the Armavir Church presented an emotional evening filled with music and laughter.

The AMAA thanks all who attended and helped make this a very memorable trip. □



Avedissian School children dancing



Sheen Shoghik Camp in Hankavan



At the Sartarabad Museum



At Geghart.



Nerses & Arpine Aynilian Clinic.



The Steins at the Genocide Monument.



The Phillips family at Etchmiadzin.



The new Headquarters courtyard under construction.



Praying at the Eternal Flame Memorial.



20th Anniversary of Steven & Caroline Nahigian.



Visiting with Pres. Sarkissian.



After the 90th Anniversary Concert.

AMAA Interns

Get Connected to Armenia

It was very hot in Yerevan, Armenia, during July this year, but that was no reason for the interns to lose enthusiasm. On the contrary, they were excited to follow their busy schedule of internship/work camp in Armenia organized by the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA).

Nine interns participated in this year's program. They met AMAA Field Director, Mr. Dikran Youmshakian in Munich, Germany on their way to Yerevan, Armenia. The purpose of this program was to encourage Armenian youth to be actively involved in AMAA and get connected to our homeland Armenia.

The interns came from three areas - San Francisco, CA; Cincinnati, Ohio and Paramus, NJ. They arrived in Yerevan, Armenia on Tuesday, July 8 at 4:00 a.m. Even though exhausted from a lengthy travel of almost 36 hours, they were eager and ready for action. AMAA's representative in Armenia, Rev. René Léonian, welcomed the group and gave a short introduction to life in Armenia. For most of the interns, this was their first pilgrimage to the motherland, and they were eager to see, learn and serve.

The group spent six days in Yerevan, Armenia. They were housed in the guestrooms at AMAA headquarters on 22 Nigol Douman Street. The first part of the program included four seminar sessions in Yerevan. The day started with a time for devotion and prayer. The interns sat on a balcony facing the historic Armenian mountain Ararat. Both the beautiful scene of snow covered Massis and the prayer of the day energized the interns and prepared them for work.

The first session was led by Dikran Youmshakian (AMAA Field Director), who gave the history of the AMAA and the objective for its creation. AMAA was established in 1918 with modest means but great vision to help Armenians both spiritually and physically. He described the many services the AMAA provides in 22 countries around the world including various religious, educational, social and relief programs. The participants were amazed to learn how numerous and varied were the projects and how active the organization was around the world.

The second session was led by Rev. René Léonian (AMAA Representative in Armenia), who described AMAA services in Armenia, Karabagh, Georgia and Russia. He emphasized how crucial it was for Armenians in the diaspora to be involved in Armenia and keep the lines of communication and cooperation open. Even with many services provided by various Armenian church and charitable organizations, Rev. Léonian pointed out that much more should be done, and Armenia will appreciate the continued support of all Armenians from around the world.

The third session was led by Harout Necessian (AMAA's Operations Manager in Armenia). He spoke in general on technical and financial issues and described how the programs are run. He highlighted quality assurance with emphases on the efficiency and effectiveness of the work. He introduced

some of the key members of his staff who help oversee the operations. He also gave a tour of the headquarters explaining how each department operates. One program that impressed the interns most was the Child Sponsorship program, through which more than 2800 needy children



Rev. René Léonian describing AMAA Programs in Armenia.



The interns visit AMAA's new headquarters on Baghramian Street, Yerevan.

dren are supported.

The fourth session was led by Rev. Hamlet Gureghian, Pastor of the church in Yerevan, who spoke in general about spiritual life in Armenia. He underlined the preaching of the Gospel and its impact on people as they try to overcome daily challenges and difficulties they face. Along with meeting the physical needs of people, he said, it is also important to bring God's message of love and hope.

All four sessions were concluded with a long question and answer period. The interns were curious to learn, and devise new methods of service. They pledged to do their utmost, and through their involvement in the AMAA help their brothers and sisters in the homeland.

While in Yerevan, the group participated in youth activities and joined in the worship service on Sunday at the Evangelical Church in Yerevan, where Mr. Youmshakian was the guest preacher.

On Friday the interns visited Echmiadzin and witnessed the Holy Place where Armenian Christianity was born. They learned how Sourp Krikor Lousavorich, helped King Drtad be cured from a rare disease and how Armenia became the first nation to accept Christianity. The group also visited the city of Armavir. There at the Evangelical Church, children participating in Vacation Bible School were packed in a small and overcrowded church hall. They were praising God with their songs as they welcomed the group with cheerful applause. On Saturday, the group went to the famous Vermisage market to buy souvenirs, and visited historic churches around Ashdarag.

On Sunday afternoon, the interns visited Camp Shoghig in Hankavan where they met Rev. Albert Paidian who is the Christian Education Director in Armenia. Camp was in session and children were gathered for singing. It was such a moving experience to see cheerful children participating in camp activities. The interns donated soccer balls to the camp and had an exciting soccer match with the leadership of the camp. The game ended in a tie – each team scoring five goals. Later that evening, the interns visited the beautiful Lake Sevan where they enjoyed swimming in its clear and cold water.

Early Monday morning, the group traveled to Vanatzor for the second part of the program. Vanatzor is about 120 kms from Yerevan and is a beautiful mountain city to the North. Weather in Vanatzor was very comfortable except for a few days of rain and one hail-storm. The Evangelical Church of Vanatzor is housed in a beautiful church complex which was built in 2002 by the AMAA. The building needed some repairs which the interns had volunteered to do. The interns repainted the surrounding metal fence and built a much-needed sidewalk. Local volunteers including the pastor of the church, Rev. Samvel Kirakosyan, joined the five interns to do the repair work. The other five interns helped lead the Vacation Bible School with 150 children attending. In Vanatzor, the interns were hosted at homes where they enjoyed the warm hospitality of the church members. The excitement of the children and the hundreds of church members was evident throughout the week. The church is like an active beehive with many services provided to the community. Daily Vacation Bible Schools, musical programs, the-

sports make this church a center of activity. The interns were so encouraged with all the ongoing activities. They pledged not only to help, but also to return next year. The interaction with the local community, and especially with children, was so great that the interns were always surrounded by people and children, who would never leave to go home.

The culmination of the program in Vanatzor was on Sunday, July 20 when the entire congregation, the Sunday School children and those participating in Vacation Bible School gathered in the sanctuary performing, singing and praising God. Even at difficult times, they had always enjoyed God's love and this was another great occasion. Much credit should be given to the Pastor, Rev. kirakosyan and his wife Nariné, and to the many volunteers who do not spare any effort and time as they dedicate their talents to serve the Lord and the community in Vanatzor.

During their stay in Vanatzor, the interns had the opportunity to visit remote villages including the Village of Tsegh, which was the birth place of the famous Armenian Writer, Hovhanes Toumanian. They also visited Toumanian, a village further north on high mountains where they met with the congregation of the Evangelical Church. The Toumanian Church provides valuable services to the community in addition to the preaching of the Gospel. AMAA missionary, Sister Hannah (originally from Germany) operates a soup kitchen in the basement of the church, where over 70 elderly and children enjoy nutritious food.

On Sunday evening, July 20, the interns returned to Yerevan. On Monday, the group paid their respects to the martyrs of the Armenian Genocide as they visited the Genocide Monument in Dzidzernagapert.

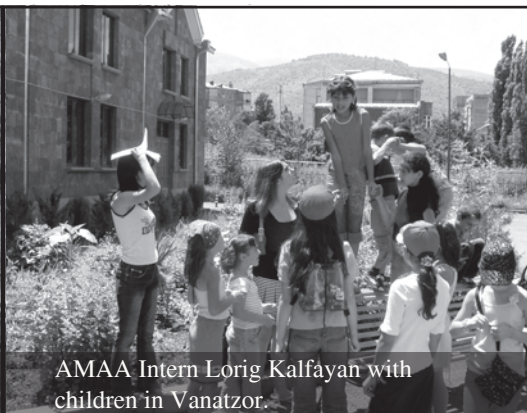
The sad moment of leaving Armenia came on Tuesday, July 22. The internship program came to an end, but not the excitement and willingness to continue to be involved in Armenia. The interns had exchanged phone numbers and e-mail addresses with people they met in Armenia and promised not only to be in touch but also to support each other. They look forward to next year's program, which probably will include a larger number of participants.

This was indeed a sacred pilgrimage to our homeland Armenia, and will definitely impact the lives of the participants and keep them connected to their roots.

Those who want to participate in next year's program, should contact the AMAA office and communicate with the Field Director, Dikran Youmshakian at 31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ, 07652 or call 201-265-2607. □



AMAA Interns and Hankavan Camp leaders after their soccer game.



AMAA Intern Lorig Kalfayan with children in Vanatzor.



The interns at work at Vanatzor Church.

VISITATIONS

AMAA Executive Director Andy Torigian and AMAA Board Member Chuck Bilezikian Visited AMAA Supporters in California

In June, AMAA Executive Director, Andy Torigian and AMAA Board Member, Chuck Bilezikian visited various supporters and members of the AMAA who have been interested in many of the AMAA projects and have expressed a desire to support them. The AMAA has major programs in Armenia and Karabagh, Lebanon and the United States. Andy and Chuck presented these to those they visited to ascertain their degree of interest.



(L to R): Rev. Karl Avakian, Chuck Bilezikian, Bob Garabedian and Andy Torigian in Bob's office in Fresno, CA. Bob has been very instrumental in getting funds for the AMAA.



(L to R): AMAA Executive Director Andy Torigian, Hrair Darakjian, M.D. (Orthopedic Surgeon), AMAA Board Member Nazareth Darakjian, M.D. (Ophthalmologist) and AMAA Board Member Chuck Bilezikian. Drs. Nazareth and his wife Ani are major supporters of the AMAA and Dr. Hrair is a major supporter of Camp Arev.



(L to R): Rev. Karl Avakian, Chuck Bilezikian, Mrs. Arminee Shishmanian, Nancy Avakian and Andy Torigian. Dr. Leo and Arminee have been steady supporters of the AMAA.



1st Frame (L to R): Chuck Bilezikian, Andy Torigian and Dr. Paul Atmajian meeting in Fresno, CA. Paul had visited Armenia after he had finished his internship several years ago. (left); 2nd Frame Standing (L to R) Chuck Bilezikian and Nazareth Darakjian, M.D. Sitting (L to R): Andy Torigian and Carl Kazarian in Los Angeles, CA. Carl has a very unique story and an extremely talented and humanitarian mother, Marie, who passed away last year. A future article will expound on both of them; 3rd Frame (L to R): Chuck Bilezikian, Dr. Dikran Gulesserian, Andy Torigian and Rev. Karl Avakian meeting in Fresno, CA. Dr. Dikran and his wife Theresa are supporters of the AMAA.

FIELD VISITATIONS



(L to R): Chuck Bilezikian, Karen and George Daoudian and Andy Torigian meeting in Fresno, CA. Karen and George have been major supporters of the AMAA for many years.



(L to R): Andy Torigian, Chuck Bilezikian, Rev. Karl Avakian and Michael Berberian meeting in Fresno, CA. Michael is a strong supporter of many projects in Fresno.

The UAECNE holds its 64th Annual Assembly

The opening service of the 64th Annual Assembly of the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East (UAECNE) took place in the Holy Trinity Armenian Evangelical Church of Kessab, Syria on Sunday, July 6, 2008. The service was led by Pastor Sevag Trashian of the church, communion was officiated by the vice-chair of the Central Committee, Rev. Serop Megrdochian, and the sermon was delivered by the President of the UAECNE, Rev. Megrdoch Karagoezian. The theme of the sermon and the entire Assembly was taken from Luke 4:18-19 which reads: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

For three full days, the 46 voting delegates and 20 non-voting members and guests (from Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Iran, and Australia) discussed matters that pertain to the various ministries, churches, institutions and committee of the UAECNE with a renewed focus this year on the calling of the church to exemplify its "Freedom to Serve." Revs. Robert Sarkissian and Paul Haidostian led seminars that presented the various aspects of social work and action in terms of need, theology, Armenian Evangelical history, ecumenical cooperation, and new perspectives.

Revs. Hovhannes Sevajian and Serop Megrdochian shared the responsibility of moderator of the Assembly whereas Rev. Vatche Ekmekjian and Ms. Salpi Titizian served as secretaries.

Noteworthy in the reports of the Central Committee and the various churches were the challenges that relate to the ongoing brain-drain from the region especially the emigration of a number of leaders and pastors; the economic hardships of our communities; the financial pressures on our schools which are considered as highly critical for our ministry. At the same time, the reports and contributions highlighted the many blessings and fulfilling ministries our churches are involved in.

A number of decisions were made, among which were the following:

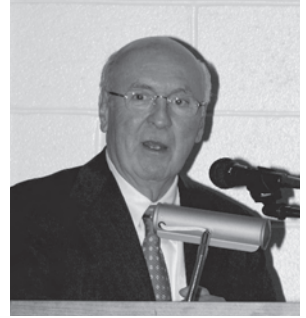
- Re-election of Rev. Megrdoch Karagoezian as president of the UAECNE for a new term of five years.
- Election of members of the Central Committee, the Constitution Committee, and the Publications Committee.
- Granting Mr. Elias Ousta Jabbour and Mr. Samuel Tashjian license to preach for one year; Granting permanent preaching licenses to Pastor Michel Aghamalian and Pastor Simon Der Sahagian; Granting the permission to ordain Pastor Ibrahim Nseir and Pastor Michel Aghamalian to the ministry of Word and Sacrament.

The Assembly acknowledged the fact that we are in a jubilee year in many respects: the 162nd anniversary of the Armenian Evangelical Church, the 90th anniversary of the AMAA, the 30th anniversary of the Armenian Evangelical World Council, and the 90th anniversary of the first Armenian Republic. The three day program included daily worship services, prayer meetings, presentations and a musical program by the "Yerakhdik" choir of Aleppo led by Mrs. Shoghagat Apartian-Selimian in honor of the late Rev. Barkev Apartian.

The closing service of the 64th Assembly was led by Pastor Simon Der Sahagian of Koerkune and Ekizoluk (Kessab), the sermon was delivered by the head of the Armenian evangelical community in Syria, Rev. Haroutune Selimian, and the benediction was given by the President of the Union. □

Robert Hekemian Sr., Named Elder Emeritus at APC

On Sunday, March 16, 2008, Mr. Robert Hekemian, Sr., was honored during the Palm Sunday Dinner at the Armenian Presbyterian Church of Paramus, NJ and was named Elder emeritus. Following is the speech he delivered.



In a few months we will be celebrating our church's 110th anniversary, a monumental event, for which we should truly be thankful to God. I cannot claim that I have been around for the past 110 years, but I certainly have witnessed many significant changes that have taken place during the past 60 years. Fortunately, many of those changes have been good; however in speaking with you today, I do not want to dwell on the past, instead I would like to say a few words about our future.

Our church has grown and has made tremendous progress under the most capable leadership of Pastor Berj. We have witnessed good changes as he has motivated us to do the work that God has called us to do. Pastor Berj has made it very clear that the church is not about us, it is about God, and the work that He wants us to do, starting here in our community, in our nation and to the ends of the world. He has boldly challenged us through Christ's teachings that Armenian culture and heritage are not the means of salvation, but Christ is. So many of his sermons have encouraged us to leave our comfort zones and take risks, by doing things we have never done or thought of before.

Now risk taking can be a risky business to many of us. It makes some feel uncomfortable. Many say: "Why rock the boat?" "Why do things differently?" "We have always done it this way." "Why change now?" Churches and organizations that had such narrow vision inevitably waiver and ultimately fail.

Pastor Berj constantly states that we need to be more concerned about being Biblically correct, rather than politically correct. Pastor Berj mentioned in his sermon this morning that the church is not about democracy but about theocracy. Taking risks for God is necessary in order to bring about meaningful change, which will result in spiritual growth. By any sense of the definition, change fosters risk. Alex Haley, the author of *Roots*, said this about taking risks, "Nothing is more important. Too often we are taught how not to take risks. When we are children in school—we are told to respect our heroes. What we are not told is that these leaders—were, in fact, rule-breakers. They were risk-takers in the best sense of the word; they dared to be different." Just think a moment about the formation of this Republic, great men such as John Adams, George Washington, Ben Franklin and Thomas Jefferson vehemently fought for change through independence. They were branded as revolutionaries; they risked all they had and a bounty was placed on their heads. Had they not taken the risk and made huge personal sacrifices, this great republic most probably never would have persevered. Friends, a calm sea has never produced a skilled sailor. An anonymous person once said: "We cannot discover new oceans unless we have the courage to lose sight of the shore." A church trapped within its comfort zones will never see the future.

If taking risks for God and his Kingdom is a Biblically accurate statement, then I call upon all of you to do your part, thereby ensuring that our church continues to evolve in the correct spiritual course and become the beacon of light in our community and the world.

Pastor Berj, I want to thank you and the members of the session for selecting me to receive this prestigious title of ELDER EMERITUS. I am honored and proud and will use the authority wisely.

I also want to thank each of you present today for making this Palm Sunday dinner a great success, and my thanks to the Trustees and their many helpers for arranging such a wonderful banquet.

In closing, my vision and hope for this church is to make it a God-centered house of worship for all people, for a better and different tomorrow. □

Spiritual Corner

GOOD HEART, BAD HEART

by Dikran Youmshakian

“Create in me a clean heart, O God” (Psalm 51:10)

The word “heart” appears over a thousand times in the Bible, mainly with metaphorical meaning, and it is associated with personality, feeling, thought, sight and character. A loving heart indicates passion and compassion, a broken heart indicates grief and sorrow, a brave heart indicates courage or strong will.

With advances in medicine, a heart today can be transplanted or medically healed thus saving or extending life. Right before her husband's heart transplant, a wife wondered what kind of heart her husband will get – a good heart or a bad heart. She was concerned with the personality her husband might acquire after the operation. She failed to realize that a heart can be transplanted or healed medically, but it takes the Holy Spirit to change the heart and transform the person. Only God can create in us a clean heart. Only God can open our hearts and make us loving, caring and compassionate.

Not all people during their life time will experience heart-related problems and not all might need to see a surgeon. But we all need God and His Holy Spirit for a changed and clean heart. Let us then pray as the psalmist did and ask God to create in us a clean heart. A changed and clean heart will eventually change the world. □

Haigazian University's 48th Commencement Exercises

On Friday, July 4, 2008, Haigazian University graduated a record number of 157 students, in the First Armenian Evangelical Church courtyard, Beirut.

Among the 1200 invitees, present were the Minister of Higher Education, Dr. Khaled Kabbani representing the President of the Republic, Minister of Administrative Affairs, Jean Oghassabian representing the Prime Minister, and MP. Hagop Pakradounian presenting the Speaker of the Parliament, in addition to deputies Pierre Daccache and Dr. Yeghia Jerejian, the Armenian Ambassador to Lebanon, H.E. Roupen Kharazian, university representatives, diplomats, clergy, members of the Board of Trustees, parents, relatives, and fellow students.

The ceremony started as Faculty and Graduates marched through the crowd of parents, relatives and friends in a remarkable processional march, "Pomp and Circumstance" by Sir Edward Elgar, followed by the Lebanese National Anthem, and the Invocation by Rev. Robert Sarkissian, Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees.

The University President, Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian welcomed the audience and acknowledged the special guests on the stage. In his trilingual speech, he stressed the role Haigazian University and its sister institutions are playing to counter the negative tides of our days. The guest speaker of the ceremony was the Minister of Economy and Trade, Mr. Sami Haddad, who tackled the issue of the human capital of Lebanon. Talking of economy, Mr. Haddad highlighted the important sectors of the Lebanese economy, such as the banking sector. Registrar Roubina Artinian and Deans Fadi Asrawi and Arda Ekmekji presented the graduates who received their degrees from President Haidostian. The valedictorians were Nayiri Kalajian, speaking in English, and Mirvat Al Ammouri, speaking in Arabic.

After singing the Alma Mater, the ceremony concluded with the benediction given by the President of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East, Rev. Meguerdich Karageozian. □



CAMP AREV 2008 BANQUET -- "BUILDING ON THE FOUNDATION OF OUR LORD"

Each year, I am amazed at the amount of energy and excitement generated in preparation for, and during the Camp AREV Banquet. The May 31 banquet, with capable Co-Chairs Debbie Levonian and Arsine Phillips and their committee, was no exception. With the verse in Corinthians: "For no man can lay a foundation other than the one that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" as their beacon, a year of progress at Camp AREV took place—plans all approved, ground-breaking in April, (with much fan fare), campers registered—and all systems "go" for this summer.

The M.C. for the evening was Daniel Goglanian of the Armenian Christian Fellowship of Orange County. He reiterated AREV's vision: "To reach campers for Christ." Shant Abajian, Associate pastor of Armenian Christian Fellowship of Orange County gave the Opening Prayer. Jennifer Abajian, the new Director of the E.J. Manishagian Armenian Evangelical Conference Center of the AEUNA was described by Hagop Ketenjian as having "The heart for ministry, and the head for administration." Two current campers, Ari Ekmekji and Mary Kalfayan shared their thoughts about the influence of Camp AREV on their lives. The UACC Worship Team led the guests in gospel songs. Razmig Minassian, Associate Pastor of UACC was the keynote speaker. He referred to AREV as his second home. Camp Architect, Noubar Aroyan of Aroyan & Associates shared how a master plan is in place, work is underway, all permits approved, grading complete, and funds spent wisely.

Board Chairman, Hagop Ketenjian presented a camp operations overview using a PowerPoint presentation. He introduced Mrs. Anahis Derian and shared how her generous donation has fully-funded the construction of the multi-purpose Derian Fellowship Hall in memory of her late husband, Henry Derian. The free-standing Darakjian Chapel has been fully-funded by Dr's Hrair and Nadia Darakjian. The fully-funded Hassessian Cabin/Infirmary donated by Rev. & Mrs. Harold and Siranoosh Hassessian will provide the much-needed space for health care of the campers.

Debby Britton was honored for her six years on the Board as Treasurer.

The evening closed with a benediction by Aren Bahadourian, Assistant Pastor of the Armenian Brotherhood Bible Church.

Once again, Camp AREV gave itself a party—A most exciting and inspirational one—highlighting the remarkable love and support from the community. □



Camp AREV Banquet Co-Chairs Debbie Levonian and Arsine Phillips, Fellowship Hall Donor Anahis Derian, and Camp Board Chairman Hagop Ketenjian.

- Joyce Abdulian

Ամերիկայի Հայ Աւետարանական Ընկերակցութիւն Եւ Ամոր Հայ Ազգային Առաքելութիւն

Վեր. Պարգեւ Ն. Տարազճեան

«Դուք կը տեսնէք այս թշուառութիւնը որուն ենթարկուած ենք, եւ թէ՛ ի՛նչպէս Երուսաղէմ աներուած, ու անոր դռները
այրուած են: Եկէ՛ք, Երուսաղէմի պարիսպը շինենք, որպէսզի ա՛լ չնախատուինք:» (Նէեմ. 2. 17)

Նէեմեայի այս սրտառու լոյսը՝ որ ուղղուած էր Ն.Ք. 5-րդ դարուն Ասորեստանի գերութենէն Պաղեստին վերադարձող իր ազգակիցներուն՝ ազդարարութիւն ու մարտահրաւեր եղաւ նաեւ Ամերիկայի Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիներուն, իսկ անոր խօսնակը հանդիսացաւ Վեր. Միհրան Թ. Գալայճեան: Բնիկ Էվերեկցի, ան իր երիտասարդ տարիքին Ամերիկա ապաստանած էր եւ ուսանած՝ Ելլի Համալսարանը ու Աստուածաբանական դպրոցը, ու իբրեւ ձեռնադրեալ Հովիւ կը ծառայէր ամերիկեան եկեղեցիի մը մէջ: Աստուած անոր սրտին մէջ դրաւ ցեղասպանութենէն ճողոպրած իր ազգակիցներուն տառապանքը Թուրքիոյ, Արաբական երկիրներու, ու Հայաստանի մէջ: Ազգային վերաշինութեան իր կոչը եւ աշխատանքը ապարդին չմնացին: 1918-ին, Յունիս 7-ին, Հայ Աւետ. Եկեղեցիներու Արեւելեան Միութիւնը՝ Ուստրի մէջ գումարուած՝ իր Տարեկան Համաժողովին ընթացքին ծնունդ տուաւ այս պատմական ընկերակցութեան: Վեր. Գալայճեան ոչ միայն յղացաւ Աւետարանականի գաղափարը, հապա եղաւ անոր առաջին վարիչ-քարտուղարը:

Իր պատմական մէկ ճառին մէջ Վեր. Գալայճեան այսպէս կը նկարագրէ Հայ Աւետարանականի դերը. «Մենք հիմնեցինք Հայ Աւետարանական Ընկերակցութիւնը այն խոր համոզումով՝ թէ մեր մարտիրոսացեալ հայ ազգը պիտի շարունակէ ապրիլ իբրեւ ազգ. թէ՛ ան ունի աստուածային վսեմ կոչում մը՝ իբրեւ առաջին քրիստոնէայ ազգ՝ ո՛չ միայն դաւանելու իր Փրկիչ Տէր Յիսուսը, ու կրելու Քրիստոսի տառապալի խաչը ի տես ամբողջ աշխարհի՝ հապա նաեւ դառնալու ջահակիրը քրիստոնէական բարձր քաղաքակարթութեան Մերձաւոր Արեւելքի ժողովուրդներուն մէջ... Ուրեմն, անհրաժեշտ է ամէն գնով սատարել մեր ազգային հոգեւոր վերաշինութեան գործին»: Ուրիշ առիթով Վեր. Գալայճեան կը կատարէ հետեւեալ յայտարարութիւնը. «Մենք պիտի վերաշինենք Հայաստանի մէջ թէ՛ այլուր՝ այն ինչ որ Թուրքը քանդեց - եկեղեցի, դպրոց, եւ հաստատութիւն, եւ թոյլ պիտի չտանք որ մէկ մանուկ իսկ զրկուի դպրոցական կրթութիւնէ՝ չքաւորութեան պատճառով»: Անշուշտ նկատելի է Գալայճեանի ազգասիրական, ու ազգակերտումի հոգին ու մարտահրաւերը:

1970-ական թուականներուն, Մինիսոթիսի մէջ University of Minnesota-ն գիրք մը հրատարակեց - Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East (Բողոքական Դիւանագիտութիւնը եւ Մերձաւոր Արեւելքը) անունով, որուն հեղինակն է Prof. Joseph L. Grabill՝ պատմագէտ

ու պատմութեան փրոֆէսոր: Այս գիրքը՝ դատելով իր խորագիրէն՝ անշուշտ թէ մեծապէս կը հետաքրքրէր զիս, ու միայն 1980-ական թուականներուն էր որ ձեռք անցուցի օրինակ մը: Հայ Դատով զբաղող մտաւորականներ շատ շահեկան պիտի գտնեն այս գիրքը՝ որ կը ներկայացնէ ամերիկեան միսիօնարութեան ունեցած դերը ի նպաստ հայ դատին, ու Հայաստանի անկախութեան համար տարուած աշխատանքներուն մէջ: Ինձի համար մեծ եւ ուրախ անակնկալ մը եղաւ կարդալ այդ գիրքին մէջ Ամերիկայի Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիներու ունեցած դերին եւ գործօն մասնակցութեան շուրջ՝ քաղաքական այդ ազգային ու միջազգային ժողովներուն մէջ: Զարմանքս իր գագաթնակէտին հասաւ երբ այս գիրքին մէջ հանդիպեցայ նաեւ մեր *Ամերիկայի Հայ Աւետարանական Ընկերակցութեան* (Armenian Missionary Association of America) անունին, որ 1918 թ.ին մասնաւոր ճնշում կը բանեցնէ Ամերիկեան Միսիօնարական վերին մարմիններուն՝ յատկապէս անոնց Ընդհանուր Վարիչը եղող Ճէյմս Պարթընի վրայ՝ որ Նախագահ Ուիլքինի կառավարութեան մօտ միջամտէր ի նպաստ Հայ Դատին, ու Հայաստան դառնար անկախ պետութիւն մը՝ Ամերիկեան հոգատարութեան ներքեւ: Ու երեւակայել որ մեր Աւետարանականը ծնունդ առած էր նոյն այդ տարին...:

Հարկչեմ տեսներ անդառնալ Հայ Աւետարանական Ընկերակցութեան 90-ամեայ ծառայութիւններուն՝ հայ ազգին ընդհանրապէս, ու հայ աւետարանական համայնքին, եկեղեցիներուն, ու դպրոցներուն՝ մասնաւորապէս: Սակայն, չեմ կրնար չտալ իմ անձնական մէկ վկայութիւնս՝ Հայ Աւետարանականի ունեցած կենսական դերին շուրջ՝ իմ ուսումնական կեանքիս, հոգեւոր կոչումիս իրագործումին, ու եկեղեցական ծառայութիւններուս ճամբով: Գնահատանքի ու շնորհակալութեան հոգիով կը շնորհաւորեմ անոր 90-ամեակը, ու կ'աղօթեմ որ Աստուած օրինէ բարի յիշատակը այս Ընկերակցութեան վաղեմի հիմնադիրներուն, եւ գործիչներուն: Կ'աղօթեմ նաեւ անոր ներկայ բոլոր նուիրեալ առաջնորդներուն, գործակատարներուն, ինչպէս նաեւ անոր ետին կեցող անդամներուն ու եկեղեցիներուն համար, որպէսզի Աստուած զօրացնէ զանոնք ու յարատեւութեան հոգի շնորհէ անոնց, ու այս բոլորը թող սատարէ՝ Յիսուս Քրիստոսի Թագաւորութեան յառաջացման, ու Հայ ժողովուրդին հոգեւոր բարօրութեան: □

Վկայութիւն մը՝ Ներկայացուած Ամերիկայի Հայ Աւետ. Եկեղեցիներու Երկամեայ Համաժողովին, 26-29 Յունիսի, 2008, Կլէմտէյն, Քալիֆորնիա:

Մերտինեան Հայ Աւետարանական Վարժարանի 2007-2008 Տարեշրջանի Հունձքը

Մերտինեան Հայ Աւետարանական Վարժարանի Նախակրթարանի եւ Միջնակարգի բաժիններու ամառվերջի հանտէսը այս տարի տեղի ունեցաւ Յունիս 20, 2008-ին, վարժարանի հանդիսասարահին մէջ:

Պետական եւ ազգային քայլերգներու երգեցողութենէն ետք, Միացեալ Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիի Հովիւ՝ Վեր. Ճէյսըն Մաթոսեան կատարեց բացման աղօթքը:

Օրուան առաջին պատգամաբերն էր հոգաբարձութեան ատենապետը՝ Տօքթ. Հրայր Աթիքեան: Երկրորդ պատգամաբերն էր Վեր. Ճէյսըն Մաթոսեան:

Նախակրթարանի եւ Միջնակարգի շրջանաւարտները մէջ ընդմէջ ներկայացուցին խմբային արտասանութիւններ եւ երգեր: Շրջանաւարտները, տնօրէն՝ Պրն. Յովսէփ Ինճէ-ճիքեանէ ստացան իրենց վկայականներն ու մրցանակները:

Հանդիսութիւնը լի էր անակնկալներով - յատուկ գնահատանքի արժանացաւ Տիկ. Ռիթա Մէնէշեանը որ կամաւոր կերպով յանձն առած էր վարժարանի վարկաւորման համար տարուած աշխատանքներու համադրումը: Վարկաւորումի կիսաշրջանի այցելութիւնը յաջողութեամբ պսակուեցաւ Ապրիլին: Գնահատանքի արժանացաւ նաեւ ուսուցչուհիներէն Տիկ. Սանտրա Մաղաբեանը, որ 12 տարիներու բոլորանուէր ծառայութենէ ետք, կը դադրի աշխատանքէ:

Ծնողա-Ուսուցչաց Մարմնի ատենապետուհին՝ Տիկ. Տի Զորլեան, իրենց տարեկան ձեռնարկներուն հասցոյթին երկրորդ բաժինը, 45,000 տոլարի չէքը յանձնեց հոգաբարձութեան ատենապետին:



Պրն. Ինճէճիքեան իր փակման խօսքին մէջ նշեց ուրախալի երեւոյթ մը՝ WASC-ի կողմէ Մերտինեան Վարժարանի 6 տարուայ վարկաւորումի հաստատումը՝ կիսաշրջանի յաճախումքին կողմէ. նաեւ՝ դպրոցը նորակառոյց շէնքով մը օժտելու ծրագրին արտօնութիւնը՝ քաղաքապետութեան կողմէ:

Վեր. Ճէյսըն Մաթոսեանի օրհնութեան աղօթքով վերջ գտաւ հանդիսութիւնը:

Մանկապարտէզի հանդէսը տեղի ունեցաւ Յունիս 18, 2008-ին: Շրջանաւարտ եղան 24 աշակերտներ:

Մերտինեան Վարժարանը վարկաւորուած է Դպրոցներու եւ Համալսարաններու Արեւմտեան Ընկերակցութեան կողմէ - Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC):

Վարժարանի մասին յաւելեալ տեղեկութիւններու համար կարելի է հեռաձայնել 818-907-8149 թիւին: □

Our Lord is so Good!

On June 8, 2008 more than 60 family members and friends gathered to celebrate Ann Ohanesian's 88th Birthday. This celebration took place at the home of her son David Ohanesian in Cranston, RI. As tribute to their mother's special day, in lieu of gifts, the family established an Endowment Fund designated for the general ministries of AMAA. It was a wonderful day of Christian Fellowship shared by all. Ann and her family are members of the Armenian Euphrates Evangelical Church of Providence, RI. Seated with Ann are her two lovely granddaughters, Marissa Lizotte and Davina Ohanessian. What a wonderful way to celebrate a happy occasion with gifts made to the Lord's work.



AMAA ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF JAMES JAMESON ESSAY CONTEST

"Alex Tavlian of Fresno, CA is the winner of the James Jameson Essay Contest this year," announced Mr. Doug Kurjian, Chairman of the Publications Committee of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA). Tavlian's essay in the high school category was "Adam Schiff: Friend of the Armenian Community." The panel of the judges included three other members namely Vartan Sahagian, Arthur Artinian and Judith Kurjian. Alex Tavlian who is a member of the First Armenian Presbyterian Church of Fresno, received an award in the amount of \$300. "Various factors come into play in judging writing," said Mr. Kurjian. "This includes appropriateness of material, style, clarity, content, emotion, logic, credibility, organization, development, maturity, diction, usage and connection with the reader."

In addition to Alex, three college-bound students received awards for their essays that were submitted along with their scholarship applications. The winners were Jenna Gavroian, first place, for her essay "The Hurdle of Life;" Jonathan Garabedian, second place, for his essay "Major Influences that Continue to Shape my Life;" and Lisa Der Ohanessian, third place, for her essay "Road to Success." The panel of judges for this category along with Doug Kurjian were Nurhan Helvacian, Arouss Darpinian and Berjouhi Gulesserian. The winners received awards of \$300, \$250 and \$200, respectively.

The Board of Directors of the AMAA congratulates the winners and encourages our young students to participate in this contest. The deadline for next year's contest is May 1, 2009. Those who are interested in participating can contact AMAA at 201-265-2607.

Jean Benglian-Simonian

Jean Benglian-Simonian died Friday, July 11, 2008, in Worcester, MA. She leaves a son, John E. Benglian, Jr., of Shrewsbury, MA; a daughter, Ani Benglian-Simonian of Los Angeles; two brothers, Richard M. Simonian, Esq. of Worcester and Edward Simonian and his wife Karen of Nantucket, MA; a sister, Carolyn Moberly of Worcester. Also niece Jennifer Albury and nephews Stephen Simonian, Brigham Moberly and Myles Moberly.



She was born in Worcester, daughter of Avedis K. and Rose (Hightaian) Simonian and graduated from Classical High School and Clark University in Worcester. She attended Radcliffe College and Harvard graduate school. Fluent in Spanish, Jean worked for several years for the South American Division of the Gillette Company in Boston. Then was employed as a manager at the M.I.T. Kresge Auditorium in Cambridge, MA.

She was a classical pianist and taught piano for many years. As a member of the Armenian Church of the Martyrs in Worcester she served frequently as organist.

She was happiest with her music. And many of the condolence messages received at her memorial service referred to her character and musical talent: "Jean was a very caring, generous and extremely intelligent person"... "With a great sense of humor and fabulous smile.".... "I remember her playing the piano so beautifully, soulfully." "She was truly a beautiful soul." "The happiest times of her life were spent at concerts at Tanglewood." "She was the most elegant person I've ever known."

Jean's family appreciates and offers thanks to those who sent the many kind and thoughtful messages to her memorial service. □

Arminé Grace Dingilian Aroian

Arminé Grace Dingilian Aroian, 99, active throughout her life in church and community, passed into glory July 14 at Keough Assisted Living in Chantilly, VA, where she moved in January 2008. Since August 2006, she had resided with her daughter Lois Aroian in Fairfax, VA.

Arminé, a niece of Mathilda Haigazian, was a longtime supporter of Haigazian University in Beirut through the Dingilian Fund and AMAA charities.

A survivor of the Armenian Genocide of 1915 in which her father was killed, Arminé

immigrated to the United States with family survivors in 1922. Graduating from George Washington High School in New York in 1926, she won the top prizes in mathematics, French, and history as well as one of two High Record Scholarships awarded to graduates. She graduated with honors from Hunter College where she majored in French and Spanish. She was active in the Armenian Student Association and in the Methodist Church.

In 1941, Arminé married a mathematics professor at the college, Leo Aroian. They moved to the community of Westchester in Los Angeles in 1950 with their two daughters, Juliet and Lois.

The Aroians moved in 1968 to Schenectady, New York where Leo Aroian established the Ph.D. program in Industrial Administration at Union College.

After Professor Aroian's second retirement at age 80, Union College announced the establishment of the Leo A. Aroian Research Fellowship. Arminé asked family and friends to endow the fellowship in honor of their 50th wedding anniversary in lieu of a party. She herself donated her family home as well as a substantial amount of money. The fellowship has been awarded to a deserving graduate student ever since. The Graduate College at Union honored Arminé at its commencement in 2006.

Arminé returned to her birthplace of Bursa, Turkey three times in her life: twice with her husband Leo and once with her older daughter Juliet Carpenter. Arminé was a lifelong humanitarian, strongly supporting the downtrodden.

Arminé is survived by her daughters Dr. Lois Aroian and Dr. Juliet Carpenter, grandsons Bel and Toby Carpenter, and great-grandchildren Julianna Arminé and Soren Carpenter. Her will included generous bequests to AMAA charities. In accordance with her modesty and generous spirit, she donated her body to George Washington University Medical School. □

Flora Koundakjian

Flora was born on April 1, 1906 into the Armenian Genocide.

Flora Koundakjian made it to the beautiful age of 102 and died on July 19, 2008. I do not remember any Armenian, and/or American who has arrived to this age and got the respect they deserved from the members



of their families.

Flora had 5 daughters -- Adel, Ann, Margaret, Elizabeth and Marion -- but her treasures were her 14 grandchildren and 20 great grandchildren. They all came to see her, kiss her lovingly and give their love and respect to Grammy or Grammy-gram.

It was reported that her grandson Martin, was one of her primary caregivers in her last few years. He had grown to be such, since Martin was around two, when he offered Grammy his finger to suck, which according to family gossip, was when their relationship blossomed.

Flora loved to tell her stories. The stories of her childhood in Deurtyol, the small village in southern Ottoman Turkey, Cilician Armenia. She talked about her sisters, about her mother Aznive, (which means lovely, nice and kind), and about her grandmother, the midwife, who traveled to the nearby villages on horseback to deliver the new Armenian generation. She did not like to discuss the Genocide.

Flora was a warrior and a survivor. A survivor of the Genocide, who took care of her sisters during the horrific times and who gave loving care to all her siblings and to her beloved husband Jabra, who was known to all as the "Buster" to the rest of the family.

Two years ago, President George W. Bush, somehow heard about her 100th birthday and sent her a congratulatory letter. Even that letter was delayed in delivery. It had to pass through the Homeland Security Control so that nothing was included in it to harm Flora.

Funeral Services and a memorial lunch were held at the Armenian Memorial Church of Watertown, MA. □

- Story and photo by Harry L. Koundakjian

Marie Kassouny

Marie Kassouny, beloved by family and friends, died on Sunday, May 18, 2008 at Vantage House, Columbia, MD, where she resided with her sister, Margaret. Marie was born August 6, 1922, the second daughter of Rev. Yeghia and Mrs. Yernique Kassouny.



Marie has enjoyed a long and distinguished dual career as professor of piano performance and as concert artist. Her mother, a gifted musician, was her first teacher. In Beirut (Lebanon) she continued her studies with the Russian pianist Arkadie Kouguell, head of the Institute of Music at the American University of Beirut. In 1946,

OBITUARIES

she left Beirut to pursue advance study at New York's Juilliard School of Music. This led to Bachelors and Masters degrees in piano at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa and to doctoral studies at Boston University with the celebrated Hungarian pianist Bela Nagy.

In 1949, while she was still a student of music, she appeared with the Drake-Des Moines Symphony Orchestra, playing Cesar Franck's Symphonic Variations. The Des Moines Register described Marie's performance thus: "Miss Kassouny displayed a pianistic talent of unusually high order ... a most gratifying performance and restatement of Franck's poetry, fantasy, passion and power."

In 1951, she made her professional debut in Philadelphia's Ethical Society's Auditorium in Rittenhouse Square. Over the years, she made numerous concert appearances in the Middle East, and primarily in the United States. Indeed, she had built an enviable reputation for solid yet sensitive interpretation, winning the plaudits of critics and audiences alike.

As an academician, Marie headed the Piano Department at Friends University, Wichita, Kansas, and later for much of her career, at Malone College in Canton, Ohio where she ultimately chaired the Fine Arts Division. Her honors include prestigious competition prizes, membership in Pi Kappa Lambda, and a biographic listing in the World's Who's Who of Musicians. □

Margaret Krikorian

Margaret Badeer-Krikorian was born in Mersin, Turkey on April 30, 1920. She was the fourth child of Dr. & Mrs. Sarkis and Persapé Badeer. After being spared the Genocide, at age four her parents moved to Beirut, Lebanon. She grew up and was educated in Beirut. She was a lover of music and played the piano and organ, often at many church and youth camp functions.



In 1941, she married Dr. Puzant Krikorian and lived in Tripoli, Lebanon, where he worked as a medical doctor for Presbyterian Mission Hospital. Her first two children, Jane and Eileen, were born in Tripoli. In 1949, they moved to Beirut, Lebanon, where Dr. Puzant Krikorian, Mr. Augustine Badeer, Margaret's brother, and Dr. Peter Manoogian, opened the Christian Medical Center hospital (CMC) to serve the community in Beirut. During the beginning years of the CMC Hospital she was very much involved with the daily operations of the hospital, helping as a

dietitian and performing any supportive roll she could. Her third and fourth children, John and Claire, were born at the CMC Hospital. She was very active in her church and Kchag, the summer camp located in the mountains of Lebanon, where, for part of the summer, many underprivileged children were brought for a time of renewal, nourishment and hearing the word of God. Margaret was also very active in the women's organization of the Armenian Evangelical Church helping with schools, youth groups and music.

In 1975, Puzant and Margaret moved to Fresno, CA where they have lived ever since. They attended the Pilgrim Armenian Cong'l Church where Margaret was involved with the women's organizations. Margaret also loved to cook at church luncheons and dinners. She was always ready to help.

Margaret loved people and especially her family. She cared for all and always had a piece of advice for her children, her husband, the pastor, the neighbors, the mailman and even shoppers at the grocery store. She knew the way to someone's heart was through their stomach and with a smile, so she used that approach with ease and regularity.

Margaret is survived by her husband Puzant Krikorian (99), her brother, Dr. Henry

Badeer of Omaha, Nebraska, her children Jane Havoonyan, Eileen Shahbazian, John Krikorian and Claire Shakelian and their families. The Krikorian family would like to thank all who have expressed their love and prayers for the family. Margaret loved people and was always ready to help where needed and to tell them of the redeeming love of Jesus, her Lord and Savior.

A memorial service was held on Friday, August 15, 2008, at the Pilgrim Armenian Church in Fresno CA. Memorial gifts may be made to: Camp Arev and sent to Pilgrim Church at 3673 N. First St. Fresno, CA. 93726. □

The AMAA Board of Directors and staff also wish to extend their heartfelt condolences to the families of the following deceased friends whose names were submitted to us for publication in the AMAA NEWS.

*Vartkess Balian
Arlington, VA*

** Frederick Gratchian
Huntington, CT*

** Memorials designated for AMAA*

ARMENIAN BIBLES • ՀԱՅԵՐԷՆ ԱՍՏՈՒԱԾԱԾՈՒՆՁԵՐ

Ամերիկայի Հայ Աւետարանական Ընկերակցութեան Կեդրոնատեղիէն կարելի է ստանալ Հայերէն Աստուածաշունչեր տարբեր կազմերով եւ ծաւալով: Ստանալու համար հաճեցէք ամբողջացնել վարկի կտրօնը եւ դրկել AMAA, 31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652.

Այո, կը փափաքիմ ունենալ

- օրինակ սեւ լաթակազմ (# 13x1) - հատը \$25
- օրինակ ճերմակ թղթակազմ (# 13x2) - հատը \$20
- օրինակ սեւ կաշեկազմ (# 13x3) - հատը \$30
- օրինակ ճերմակ կաշեկազմ (# 13x4) - հատը \$30
- օրինակ մեծածաւալ կանաչ լաթակազմ (#13n) - հատը \$20

Ընդհանուր Գումար -----

Անուն -----

Հասցէ -----

Հեռաձայն ----- Ի-Մէյլ -----

Որպէս առաքման ծախս հաճեցէք անցնել \$5.00 առաջին օրինակին համար եւ \$2.00 իւրաքանչիւր յաւելեալ օրինակի համար: (Գանատայի համար Ամերիկեան \$6.00 առաջին օրինակին համար եւ Ամերիկեան \$3 իւրաքանչիւր յաւելեալ օրինակի համար):

Ծանօթ: 10-է անլի օրինակներու համար 20% զեղջ պիտի տրուի: Հաճեցէք չէքերը գրել AMAA անունով: Credit Card-ով վճարելու համար հեռաձայնել AMAA-ի Գրասենեակը 201.265.2607:



**OFFICIAL CALL TO THE 89th ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE ARMENIAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA**
Celebrating 90 Years of Miracles

The Eighty-Ninth Annual Meeting of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), will be held on Saturday, October 18, 2008, at 9:30 a.m. at the AMAA Headquarters, 31 W. Century Rd., Paramus, NJ. All members of the AMAA are invited to attend the meeting to:

- I. Consider and approve the reports of the Officers, Committees, Chapters, and Affiliated boards of the Association for fiscal 2007-2008;
- II. Review the financial reports for fiscal 2007-2008;
- III. Announce the names of the newly elected Board members to replace those whose terms have expired;
- IV. Elect four members to the Nominating Committee;
- V. Elect an Auditor;
- VI. Consider and act upon any other business that may legitimately come before the membership.

PROGRAM OF THE 89th ANNUAL MEETING AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

Friday, October 17 at the AMAA Headquarters

- | | |
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| 9:00 am | Armenian Evangelical World Council Meeting |
| 2:00 pm | SEMINAR – AMAA: <i>Your Missionary Organization</i> – Peter Kougasian, Esq. |
| 7:00 pm | AMAA Board of Directors Meeting |

Saturday, October 18 at the AMAA Headquarters

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| 9:30 am | 89 th ANNUAL MEETING |
| 2:00 pm | AMAA Board of Directors Meeting (Short Session) |

Saturday, October 18 at Hasbrouck Heights Hilton

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| 6:30 pm | 89 th ANNUAL MEETING BANQUET, Celebrating 90 Years of Miracles |
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Sunday, October 19 at the Armenian Presbyterian Church of Paramus, NJ

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| 11:00 am | 89 th Annual Meeting Worship Service and Installation of AMAA Officers |
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Sunday, October 19 at the AMAA Headquarters

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| 5:00 pm | AEUNA Board of Directors meeting |
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Monday, October 20 at the Armenian Presbyterian Church of Paramus, NJ

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| 9:30 am | AEUNA Board of Directors Meeting |
|---------|----------------------------------|



Armenian Missionary Association of America
31 West Century Road
Paramus, NJ 07652

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